



Reflecting On A New Attitude At Work

Monday, February 4, 2008

It's Some Serious Stuff!

What another awesome Sunday God gave to us! I really do think that the "Sunday-is-the-high-point-of-our-week" switch has flipped at Northwest Bible! It is so apparent that God has answered our prayer in giving us "A New Approach To Sundays." I mean, you just sense it in the electricity in the room when you walk into the Worship Center. You feel it from the very first note that comes out of our mouths when we stand to sing. I couldn't help but think of the Olive Garden commercial yesterday—"When you're here—you're family!" Yes, God is indeed conforming us into the reality that we are brothers and sisters, because of a blood relationship we have with the same Father! Hallelujah! I wish every day could be Sunday! (But, I guess that's what eternity is for! God just gives us a dress rehearsal one day out of every seven right now!)

And I just can't say enough about the message. Once again, our Pastor provided such a BIBLICAL and PRACTICAL exposition of Ephesians 6:5-9. Really, I don't know how it could have been any more BIBLICAL, or any more PRACTICAL. Thank God for a Pastor that breaks the mold of what God said would be characteristic in the last days (2 Tim. 4:3-4). Thank God for a Pastor who unashamedly PREACHES THE WORD (2 Timothy 4:2)!

Now, think about this...

We gathered together yesterday in our Worship Center to worship God. What we learned, however, through the exposition of Ephesians 6:5-9, is that in just a little while, most of us are going to get in our cars, and go to the Worship Center again, to worship God. No, not the Worship Center where you were yesterday at 6639 Scioto Darby Road in Hilliard—but the "Worship Center" that you call the office, the plant, the site, or the shop. And no, not worship through singing, or giving, or your attitude toward the preaching of the Word—but worship through how you work, and why you work, and your attitude toward your boss!

Pastor Harrell gave us five practical principles from Ephesians 6:5-9 that God laid out in this passage so we can transform our place of employment into a place of worship. Do you remember what they were? And, do you remember what God was saying to you as these principles were being revealed?

God says in Ephesians 6:5-9, that we can see our place of employment transformed into a place of worship, and our job transformed into an expression of our worship...

1. By having a right attitude. (6:5)
2. By having integrity (6:6)
3. By willfully choosing to do what is good and helpful (6:7)
4. By trusting in God's goodness. (6:8)
5. By yielding authority. (6:9)

I challenge you before going to work today, to take out your notes and review what God was saying to you yesterday, and make sure that you've allowed Him to transform you in the areas where the Word of God "reproved, rebuked, and exhorted" you (2 Tim. 4:2).

Do you remember, that's really what the first three days of these Daily Personal Studies each week is designed to help us, and to train us to do? First of all, to REFLECT. To allow God to take us back to the things He taught us in our services through the preaching of the Word, and to spend a little more time making sure that we have specifically heard what God wanted us to hear. And then, secondly, it is to RECALIBRATE. Not only do we want to make certain that we've heard what God is wanting to say to us—we want to be sure that we know exactly what He wants us to do to adjust our lives to conform to the standard of His holy Word.

Each Monday in our study thus far, I've purposely tried to lay low in terms of my comments, or my voice, because I don't want to interfere with God's voice in your life. And, once again, I'll seek to lay low today, so God can do His thing in you.

However, I would like to be a voice—even a loud one, about the importance of what we're doing today! We've been talking for several weeks now about the importance of REFLECTING/RECALIBRATING as a follow-up to Sundays. Today, I'd like to see if God couldn't use me to "take it up a few notches." In honor of "Emeril"—we'll say "BAM!" together after each verse or passage that brings the "heat." You can say "AMEN" if you want to spoil the fun—but I'll be satisfied just as long as you say SOMETHING! BAM! AMEN! OH, ME! Or, WHATEVER!

You see, what we do in response to the Sunday message is important because of what God says in James 1:22-25.

²²But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. ²³For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: ²⁴For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. ²⁵But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.

And all God's people said...BAM! (See, you're catching on already!) God lets us know that it's a wonderful thing to hear the truth of the Word of God—but if what we hear with our ears and allow to be absorbed into our minds, doesn't make it to our hands and feet, God says, there's absolutely no blessing in that (1:25). He doesn't bless "hearing"—He blesses "doing"! He even lets us know that it is very easy to allow ourselves to be "deceived" (1:22)! You see, it "feels" very "spiritual" to be in an environment where you're hearing the Word of God proclaimed. And it "feels" very "spiritual" to be "in the know" in terms of what God says in His Word. In fact, it "feels" so "spiritual," we think that we are—but we're deceived. Hearing the Word of God can be a great thing, but if we don't act on the truth that we've heard, and we don't allow what we've heard to stop us in our tracks, and allow our lives to be changed by its glorious power, it actually becomes hazardous to us spiritually! Did you know that?

James 1:22 says it will DECEIVE us. I Corinthians 8:1b-2 says it will PUFF US UP. And Luke 12:47 says it only makes us MORE ACCOUNTABLE! I don't think any of us want to be a clueless, spiritual fat-head, barreling along each day moving closer and closer to our ultimate accounting at the Judgment Seat of Christ, not even recognizing that we've made ourselves unfaithful stewards (I Cor. 4:2) of the Word of God that has been entrusted to us. But, that's what happens when we are "hearers" of the Word, and not "doers of the Word! And all of God's people said...BAM!

You see, if we fail to respond to the Word of God properly, we move ourselves into a category of people, that I'm quite certain, we don't want God to associate us with!

Like the people Jesus was talking about in Matthew 15:8 and 9...

⁸This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me...in vain they do worship me.

BAM! Or, how about the people God was talking about to Ezekiel in Ezekiel 33:31 and 32...

³¹And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they shew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness.

BAM! Okay, I think that's enough heat for one meal! I'll back off. But, oh folks! I think God is entrusting us with something unique right now, and we must be sure that we handle it properly. I think we must live with the constant realization that "unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required" (Luke 12:48)!

I'm reminded of a group of people much like us back in Ezra's day, who realized what God was doing in their midst. Ezra voiced their prayer in Ezra 9:8. Oh, listen to it today with your heart wide open...

⁸And now for a little space grace hath been shewed from the LORD our God, to leave us a remnant to escape, and to give us a nail in his holy place, that our God may lighten our eyes, and give us a little reviving in our bondage.

Oh, there's so much I want to say about the application of that verse to us! But, I think the Spirit is telling me, He'd rather say it to you. Will you let Him? Read Ezra 9:8 again, and listen for what the Spirit wants to say to you through it.

After you've allowed Him to speak to you about that, let's allow the Spirit of God to show us how to be "doers" of the Word of God that we "heard" yesterday about our jobs.

- What is your attitude like at work?
- What kind of relationship do you have with the people you work with every day?
- What kind of relationship do you have with your boss?
- Do the people you work with know you are a Christian?
- If they don't, would they be surprised to find out that you are?
- Regardless of what your boss and/or co-workers feel about Christ or Christianity, do they respect you as a person?
- Has God ever used you to lead someone you work with into a personal relationship with Christ?
- Does anybody in your workplace ever ask you what makes you so different at work?

- Does anybody ever ask you how you maintain such a great attitude at work?

This is important stuff, y'all. Let's make sure God knows that we believe that today.

⁸And now for a little space grace hath been shewed from the LORD our God,
to leave us a remnant to escape, and to give us a nail in his holy place,
that our God may lighten our eyes, and give us a little reviving in our bondage. (Ezra 9:8)

If you have questions and/or comments regarding today's study, please direct correspondence to mtrotter@nw bible.org